

# Guidelines for the AB and ScB Psychology Concentrations

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Below are concentration guidelines that have been adopted by the concentration advisors for Psychology and the Director of Undergraduate Studies for the Department of Cognitive and Psychological Sciences. These guidelines provide additional details beyond those included in the concentration descriptions that appear in the University Bulletin. Please note that until March 2025, the University Bulletin contains erroneous information regarding the Psychology concentration. Please use these guidelines in lieu of what is written on the University Bulletin website.

Students should always consult with their advisor about course choices and their concentration plan.

## Guidelines that apply to both the AB and ScB Psychology concentrations

**Both the AB and ScB in Psychology require the completion of four broad requirements: Foundational Class (5), Analysis Classes (2, one in statistics and one in research methods), Electives (4), and a Capstone (1). We describe these below.**

### *1. Foundational Classes*

To satisfy the requirements for the AB or ScB in Psychology, students must take five (5) foundational classes. No one individual class is required – students must choose five from the list of 10 options below.

All foundational classes are taught at an introductory level, such that first-semester, first-year students can expect to succeed in the class if they apply appropriate study habits. The course numbering is topical, not in order of difficulty (i.e., 700 is not a more difficult class than 400, and 400 is not a more difficult class than 10).

To ensure breadth, students cannot take two classes with significant overlapping material to satisfy the foundational requirement. This is indicated in the list below with an **or**. Students with keen interest in the particular topics taught in these classes may take the second foundation class as an elective.

The Foundational classes are as follows:

- A) CPSY0010: Mind, Brain, and Behavior
- B) CPSY0100: Learning and Conditioning
- C) CPSY0110: Animal Behavior
- D) CPSY0200: Human Cognition – Introduction to Cognitive Psychology

- OR CPSY0220: Making Decisions (Cannot use both to satisfy Foundation requirement)
- E) CPSY0400: Introduction to Cognitive Neuroscience
  - OR CPSY0450: Brain Damage and the Mind (Cannot use both to satisfy Foundation requirement)
- F) CPSY0500: Perception and Mind
- G) CPSY0610: Children’s Thinking – Introduction to Cognitive Development
  - OR CPSY0620: Introduction to Social and Moral Development (Cannot use both to satisfy Foundation requirement)
- H) CPSY0700: Social Psychology
  - OR CPSY0710: Psychology of Happiness (Cannot use both to satisfy Foundation requirement)
- I) CPSY0702: Introduction to Clinical Psychology
- J) CPSY0800: Language and the Mind

There will usually be at least three foundational courses taught every semester.

No other courses at Brown University outside the CPSY department can be used in lieu of these foundational courses to satisfy this requirement. Courses taken as a college student at another university may be used to satisfy foundation requirements if approved by the Transfer Credit advisor and the student’s concentration advisor.

### *2. A Note about AP/IB Requirements and CPSY0010.*

Students are strongly encouraged to take CPSY0010 as a foundational class if they did not take the AP/IB course in Psychology prior to attending Brown University. This is, however, not required. AP/IB credit does not carry concentration credit (i.e., such credit cannot be used as one of the 12 required AB or the 17 required ScB courses). Students with a score of 5 on the AP Psychology exam or a score of 6 in IB Psychology may receive placement for CLPS 0010 in order to take a course for which CPSY0010 is a prerequisite. We recommend that students with these scores enroll in other foundational classes. .

Dual enrollment HS/college courses also do not carry concentration credit (i.e., these courses cannot be used as one of the 12 required AB and 17 required ScB courses). Students with such courses can petition the transfer credit advisor for placement.

### *3. Analysis Courses - Statistics*

CPSY0900 is the preferred course for fulfilling this requirement. It is offered every semester.

The following courses may be substituted for CPSY0900, upon approval of a concentration advisor: APMA1660, PHP1501, SOC1100. Students requesting course equivalency must provide a syllabus from that course to the advisor.

Students double-concentrating and students who may have taken a statistics course in another department before declaring Psychology as a concentration must discuss possible statistics

course equivalencies with their advisor.

The following courses are not equivalent to CPSY0900: APMA0650, APMA1650, DATA0200, POLY0500. These courses will not be accepted in lieu of CPSY0900.

CPSY0900 should be taken *before* the senior year, and preferably in sophomore year.

#### *4. Analysis Courses - Research Methods*

CPSY1900 or CPSY1901 are the preferred courses for fulfilling this requirement.

Other CPSY laboratory courses may be used to fulfill this requirement. See a concentration advisor for a list of approved laboratory courses. Offerings will vary every semester.

Independent study and research courses (CPSY1970, CPSY1980) cannot be used to fulfill the research methods requirement.

Courses outside CPSY cannot be used to fulfill the research methods requirement.

CPSY1900 or CPSY1901 should be taken *before* senior year, but after the completion of the statistics requirement above.

#### *5. Electives*

Concentrators are required to take four electives. Electives should be chosen in consultation with the concentration advisor. We encourage students to choose electives that fit into a coherent course of study.

At least 2 of these electives must be CPSY courses at the 1000-level.

Up to 2 electives may be taken in other departments. Courses in ANTH, APMA, BIOL, CSCI, EDUC, NEUR, PHIL, PHP, and SOC may be suitable; the exact course must be discussed with and approved by a concentration advisor. Courses in other departments might also be suitable. The advisor will request a course syllabus to determine course suitability for the Psychology concentration.

Either CLPS 1970 or CLPS 1980 may be used as an elective, with advisor permission. Independent study courses in other departments cannot be used as electives. AP or IB credits and dual enrollment HS courses cannot be used as electives.

#### *6. Capstone*

Students complete their capstone requirement in one of four ways:

- A. By participating in the honors program in the senior year, which includes completing the required CPSY1980 course.

- B. By successfully completing one-semester of CPSY1970 (Directed Readings) or CPSY1980 (Directed Research) during the senior year under the supervision of a member of the Cognitive and Psychological Sciences department or an approved trainer from another department at Brown University. Students may take CPSY1970 or CPSY1980 without being in the honors program.
- C. By successfully completing a laboratory course in the CPSY department in the senior year. Laboratory courses are at the 1000-level and have a 9 in the tenth position (e.g., 1\_9\_). Research Methods (CPSY 1900/1901) cannot be used to fulfill this requirement. Laboratory courses in other departments also cannot be used to fulfill this requirement.
- D. By the successful completion of a seminar-style course in the Cognitive and Psychological Sciences Department relevant to the student's foundational and elective focus of study. This course must be taken in the senior year. Such a course should be selected in consultation with the student's concentration advisor. This course must be a class taught in the CPSY department. However, CPSY1960, which is restricted to concentrators in Behavioral Decision Sciences, cannot be used to fulfill this requirement.

### *7. Notes about Independent Study*

CPSY1970 (Directed Reading) and CPSY1980 (Directed Research) may be used as elective courses or as a capstone course. Two semesters of CPSY1980 are required for the honors program. These are formal courses, which require 180 hours of instructional time/work on the research project. Students should expect to put in 10-20 hours of work per week.

Students should discuss the grading option (either ABC/NC or S/NC) and the grading criteria with their faculty sponsor before registering for the course.

Students are expected to submit written work as part of independent study courses. This written work can take the form of a lab notebook, a review paper of relevant literature, or an analysis and write up of the study. The exact form of the assignment should be agreed upon with the faculty member sponsoring the independent study in advance of registering for the course.

### *8. First Year Seminars*

First Year Seminars offered by CPSY carry concentration credit as electives. These seminars do not substitute for foundation courses. First Year Seminars in other departments do not carry concentration credit for the Psychology concentration.

### *9. Miscellaneous*

CPSY1970 and CPSY1980 can be used for concentration credit no more than 2 times in total (i.e., one credit for 1970 plus one credit for 1980; or two course credits for 1980; etc).

The same course (e.g., one semester of CPSY1980) cannot be used to fulfill more than one requirement.

In cases of double concentrators, no more than 2 courses can overlap with the second

concentration.

## **Guidelines that apply only to the ScB Psychology concentration**

**The Sc.B. requirements involve completing all the AB requirements, but also taking five (5) additional classes in a STEM field.**

To improve one's knowledge of psychology, we require two of the five classes for the ScB to be in the CPSY department at the 1000-level. We recommend that one of these two classes be a laboratory class (defined above), particularly if students did not use a lab class to satisfy their capstone requirement.

The remaining three classes should come from STEM departments, including APMA, BIOL, CHEM, CPSY, CSCI, MATH, NEUR or PHYS. Courses from other STEM departments might be eligible with permission of the concentration advisor. All of these courses must also be acceptable for the concentration requirements of a concentration administered by that department.

The courses used here should have some intellectual coherence, and relate to some aspect of psychological science.

AP/IB credits and First Year Seminars outside of the CPSY department cannot be used to fulfill this requirement. Dual enrollment High School courses do not fulfill this requirement.

## **Guidelines for obtaining Transfer Credit/Course Equivalency**

Students may receive transfer credit/course equivalency for concentration requirements for courses taken as a college/university student at another institution of higher learning (e.g., study abroad, study in the US).

Requests for transfer credit/course equivalency must be made through ASK. The request must include a copy of the course syllabus (not just a catalog description), and the suggested CPSY course equivalency.

The transfer credit advisor (currently Prof. Simmons) will consult with the instructor of the CLPS course to determine course equivalency.

Students should allow a minimum of 2 weeks for course approval.

Transfer credit/course equivalency will be awarded only if the outside course is equivalent in content and number of instructional hours to the Brown course, and only in accordance with Registrar's rules.

## **Student Responsibilities**

Students should be familiar with the Brown [Academic Code](#) of Conduct as well as the syllabus requirements of all courses in which they are enrolled.

Students should meet with their concentration advisor at least once per academic year.

Students should ensure that their concentration declaration is kept up-to-date, and is consistent with their internal transcript. This is particularly important in the senior year.

Students must indicate on their concentration declaration which course is being used to fulfill which requirement.

If students wish to take courses for concentration credit that are not in their approved course plan, they should discuss the substitution with their advisor to ensure the alternate courses are appropriate.